

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIMA 00862 311840Z

44

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SAB-01 EB-11 AID-20 INT-08

COME-00 TRSE-00 EUR-25 DRC-01 /166 W

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R 311800Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8705

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 0862

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PE, PN

SUBJ: EMBASSY ASSESSMENT OF TORREJOS VISIT

REF: LIMA 710

1. SUMMARY. SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS OF TORRIJOS VISIT ARE LIMITED, AND PRINCIPALLY IN ECONOMIC AREA, BUT BOTH GOVERNMENTS PROBABLY BELIEVE THEY PROFITED POLITICALLY FROM DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLICITY OF THEIR SO-CALLED REVOLUTIONARY AND ANTI-IMPERIALIST SOLIDARITY. END SUMMARY

2. GENERAL TORRIJOS GIVEN WIDE PRESS COVERAGE AND WARMEST WELCOME OF ANY RECENT VISITOR TO PERU, YET CONCRETE ACHIEVEMENTS ARE FEW. PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTED TO CREATE ATMOSPHERE OF MOMENTOUS ENCOUNTER OF TWO REVOLUTIONARY LEADERS BY EXAGGERATING IMPORTANCE OF VISIT AND PRESSURING MEDIA TO COOPERATE WITH LAVISH COVERAGE. HOWEVER, FACT THAT PERU AND PANAMA HAVE RELATIVELY LITTLE TO EACH OTHER IN ECONOMIC, TECHNOLOGICAL OR ANY OTHER TERMS FIXED THE OUTER LIMITS OF POSSIBLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

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PAGE 02 LIMA 00862 311840Z

3. ALTHOUGH CROWDS AT AIRPORT RECEPTION WAS GENERALLY POSITIVE. HEVERTHELESS, TORRIJOS' INDIVIDUALISTIC CONDUCT

DID NOT ENHANCE THE IMPRESSION HE LEFT WITH SOME PERUVIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS AND JOURNALISTS. A MINISTRY SOURCE TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT NUMEROUS SCHEDULE CHANGES AND LAST MINUTE CANCELLATIONS PIQUED MINISTRY OFFICIALS. TORRIJOS WAS OFTEN LACONIC AND SOMETIMES UNFRIENDLY (ANTICPATICO) WITH NEWSMEN, ACCORDING TO ONE PRESS SOURCE. ANOTHER JOURNALIST SAID TORRIJOS IMPRESSED HIS COLLEAGUES AS ERRATIC, RUDE AND APPARENTLY NOT BRIGHT. HIS FAILURE TO VISIT MARCONA DISCREDITED TORRIJOS WITH CROWD THAT WAITED LONG HOURS TO GREET HIM THERE, ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS. ALSO, HE FAILED TO APPEAR AT A RECEPTION IN HIS HONOR, AND MRS. TORRIJOS, PLEADING FATIGUE, DIDN'T COMPLETE HER TOUR OF VISITS. HENCE, TORRIJOS' PUBLIC IMAGE MAY HAVE SUFFERED. IN FAIRNESS TO PANAMANIAN CHIEF, HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT INDEPENDENT PRESS TRIED TO PLAY UP ASPECTS OF TORRIJOS' STYLE WHICH ARE UNCOMMON IN PERU, SUCH AS FREQUENTLY DRINKING WHAT THE PRESS HINTED WAS AGUARDIENTE FROM A CANTEEN AND WEARING FIELD FATIGUES FOR OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS. ALSO, EXTRAORDINARY SECURITY PRECAUTIONS WERE EXERCISED DURING VISIT AND SECURITY MAY HAVE BEEN CONSIDERATION IN OTORRIJOS' DECISION TO ALTER SCHEDULE FREQUENTLY. ON OTHER HAND, SOMETIMES HE MINGLED WITH CROWDS TO EXCESS.

4. FOR PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT, VISIT PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY TO REPEAT REVOLUTIONARY RHETORIC AT HOME AND REINFORCE ANTI-IMPERIALIST AND THIRD WORLD CREDENTIALS ABROAD, USING THE PANAMA CANAL ISSUE. PERU'S DESIRE TO HAVE LATIN ALLIES IS ANOTHER CONSIDERATION FOR GOP'S INTEREST IN VISIT. FINALLY, PERU HOPES TO MAKE LIMITED SALES TO PANAMA OF PIPE, FISHING BOATS AND OTHER MANUFACTURES.

5. THE VISIT WAS PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANT AND MORE OF A SUCCESS FROM PANAMANIAN VIEWPOINT. TORRIJOS RECEIVED UNPRECEDENTED PUBLICITY HERE, AND INTERNATIONAL IMAGE OF PANAMA AND ITS GOVERNMENT WERE PROBABLY ENHANCED. THE DRAMATIZATION OF PANAMA'S SO-CALLED ANTI-IMPERIALIST STANCE CONCERNING PANAMA CANAL MAY HAVE GENERATED RENEWED ENTHUSIASM AND SUPPORT IN PERU. ALSO, PANAMA MAY OBTAIN PERUVIAN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN MINING, FISHING AND PETROLEUM, ACCORDING TO TORRIJOS.

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PAGE 03 LIMA 00862 311840Z

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